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ABSTRACT

In spite of limited physical plant facilities, faculty expertise, and operational funds, rural curricula and instruction can implement career education (CE) into the Kindergarten through Grade 12 instructional program by incorporating the natural, social, and human resources. A necessary part of this career education program would be concerned proximity congruency vis-a-vis community resources; that is, a situation in which students are perceptually or physically exposed to the world of work. Student awareness, exposure, and skills training can be enhanced when instructional programs are structured to provide a balance between pre-employment and psychomotor development, and skills application in real world of work situations. Instructional materials, career education resource centers, and a CE professional staff are also important components of a fully operational CE program. The career education coordinator position can be a means of mobilizing the support of the world of work community behind efforts to create and provide career education awareness, exploration, and skills training to students in rural systems. (TA)

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COMPREHENSIVE CAREER EDUCATION FOR AMERICA'S RURAL SCHOOLS

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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at the

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PROFESSIONAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Richard Peters is currently directing an NIE funded Experimental Schools Program (ESP) project in northern New Hampshire. NH School Supervisory Union 58's ESP project is one of ten such projects funded by the National Institute of Education - nationwide.

The Bachelor of Science in Education and Masters of Education degrees were received from the University of Maine, Orono; doctoral studies in social studies education were undertaken at the Florida State University; and the Doctor of Education degree in Curriculum and Instruction was granted by the University of Rochester (NY).

Dr. Peters has been involved in the career education program development movement since 1968. At that time, Dr. Peters was curriculum researcher for an ESEA Title III project (Operation EPIC) and responsible for the development of an industrial arts/home economics core curriculum oriented student world-of-work field trip program. The purpose of the grades 7-9 program for inner city students was to expose them to their natural and social life space environments and to make them aware of diverse occupations.

Since that time, Dr. Peters has been a K-12 social studies curriculum coordinator; a grades 9-12 department chairman; a summer session instructor at the University of Maine; and a projects director for Educational Research Associates.

Dr. Peters has had several career education articles and curriculum guide materials published over the course of the past eight years. The published list includes:

"Career Education and the Rural School Curriculum", Resources In Education (ERIC), January 1976. ED 110 638

"Career Education Instructional Materials Guide for Teachers: Kindergarten through Grade Twelve", Resources In Education (ERIC), January 1976. ED 110 723

"A Process for Career Education Program Development in a Rural School System", Rural/Regional Education News, March-April 1976, pgs. 2-4.

"The Utilization of Natural, Social, and Human Community Resources in the Process of Student Career Awareness Development", NATIONAL COOPERATIVE FOR CAREER EDUCATION RESOURCE CENTER, University of Montana, April 1976, and Resources In Education (ERIC), September 1976. ED 121 991

"Strategies Effecting Student Career Awareness and the Development of Career Decision Making Skills", (position paper), CAREER EDUCATION CONSORTIUM, State of Florida, Manatee Junior College, Bradenton, June 1976.

"A Strategy to Affect Student Career Awareness of Vocational Occupations", Abstracts of Instructional and Research Materials in Vocational and Technical Education (AIM/ARM), July 1976.

"Career Education for Student World of Work Training" (position paper), CAREER EDUCATION RESOURCE CENTER, Keene (NH) State College, August 1976.

"Career Education: Citizenship Education for the 1970's", Resources in Education (ERIC), September 1976. ED 122 062

"The Process of Student Placement at Community Resource Sites for Purposes of Pre-Employment Training and Vocational Skills Development", Resources in Education (ERIC), September 1976. ED 122 035

"The Effects of Career Education Program Development on Student Career Awareness and World of Work Decision Making" (position paper), NORTHWEST REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL LABORATORY, Portland, Oregon, September 1976.

POSITION STATEMENT

Often rural school curricula and instruction are restricted by limited physical plant facilities, faculty expertise, and operational funds. Curricula can be enriched by the incorporation of community resources; both people and places, into the Kindergarten through grade twelve instructional program.

Utilizing the resources of the community, experienced based career education programs can provide a widening variety of world of work experiences to students of different abilities and interests - for purposes of awareness, exploration, skills development and on-the-job application.

There is a wealth of human, natural and social resources available, in rural communities, to those school systems that enlist their cooperation and support. Community resource sites can be incorporated into the instructional process and can be used to supplement the instructional facilities and faculty of a given school at no additional physical plant expansion cost to the system.

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As defined herein, career education in an on-going process which begins at an early age in the life of the individual with the development of an awareness[1] of careers and occupations. This process proceeds systematically through the stages of exploration[2] and training[3] - culminating with

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1 awareness: having a conscious knowledge and understanding of the nature and/or character of something animate or inanimate.

2 exploration: to examine and investigate for purposes of affective, cognitive, and psychomotor enrichment; to develop an acquaintance with a diversity of careers and occupations as a result of direct exposure to - and interaction with.

3 training: the acquisition of content knowledge and skills via instruction and drill; pre-service skills development.

job placement[4].

This continuous process of skills acquisition, application, and enrichment on-the-job is periodically supplemented with in-service training programs and adult education classes.

If any career education program is to be successful in its attempt to present a well-integrated and sequential instructional program that is continuous (multi-grade) in nature to students - it must possess certain qualities. Among these qualities are:

1. goals and objectives: statements of purposes which provide overall direction(s) for program development and then, more-specific tasks to be accomplished and content/skills to be learned at the day-to-day level of instruction.

2. scope and sequence: the structural organization of the program which provides for in-depth instruction both within and among the several grades.

3. lessons and units: those organized one class period or multi-class period in-school or out-of-school activities which comprise the scope and sequence; the depth and breadth, of a career education program.

4. activities and materials: organized learning situations in-school and out-of-school which provide for direct student interaction and participation as well as those animate and inanimate objects which enrich awareness and learning via the several human senses.

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[4] job placement: the application of learned skills to real world of work situation(s).

5. evaluation and feedback: objective and subjective data which indicates student goal(s)/objective(s) attainment, and a format for reporting test results (performance) to students, teachers, curriculum specialists, parents, school boards, etc.

6. in-service training: on-going activities which enable teachers to become better acquainted with career education content and skills, and to become more proficient in its teaching.[5]

If a career education program is to provide worthwhile in-school and out-of-school activities to students then attention must be paid to *proximity congruency* vis-a-vis community resources.

Proximity congruency refers to the spatial relationship(s); the relative perceived or physical distance, between two or more animate or inanimate objects for purposes of completeness (unity or wholeness) and interaction.

For example, if students are discussing community helper jobs and the jobs discussed are being performed

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[5] workshops: all-day and/or half-day sessions which provide opportunities for skills development, materials construction, 'how-to-do-it' techniques, and program orientation as well as lesson/unit development and curriculum writing.

mini shops: to hour-or-less long enrichment activities concerned with materials introduction and 'how-to-do-it' demonstrations.

skillshops: follow-ups to workshops geared toward skills enrichment and scheduled for short periods of time.

outside the building while the students are inside the classroom - then there exists a state of *proximity incongruency;* that is, a situation wherein life space artifacts (animate or inanimate objects) are physically removed one from the other or are isolated and minipulated. No logical harmony of objects exists in a state of proximity incongruency.

In order to effect a harmony of parts there is a need to create a state of *proximity congruency;* that is, a situation designed to perceptually or physically unite life space artifacts for purposes of completeness and/or interaction. Thus, if a teacher wants students to learn about community help jobs the he/she must design a learning experience whereby students leave the school - go out into the community - and interact directly with world of work employees.

CAREER EXPLORATION FOR AWARENESS DEVELOPMENT

Community resources consist of those natural, social, and human phenomena to be found within the confines of an identified geographical setting.

In order to provide all students with a basic understanding of world of work careers and occupations and to enrich their skills development, there is a need to identify and utilize the various resources of the community. The author states that all students should be provided with a basic understanding of world of work careers and occupations because at some point-in-time in the life of each and every individual, he or she, must make a career decision regarding future work. There is no way be which a given individual can escape this personal and social responsibility throughout

the entirety of a lifetime. Thus, basic understanding of world of work careers and occupations is a continuous process - through the several grades - which take into consideration the maturation level of students, at any given point-in-time, as well as their abilities and interests. The overall process is a step-by-step developmental one - culminating in a product; individuals who are aware - trained - and capable of making realistic career decision regarding their futures.

CAREER DECISION MAKING

In order to provide opportunities which will enhance the processes and skills of decision making, CE programs should focus in on four interrelated areas of activity and testing. They are:

1. awareness of occupations
2. attitudes toward work
3. career choice competencies
4. aptitudes for work.

Students should be aware of diverse occupations in order that they have a variety of choices available to them. Without a positive attitude toward the world of work the students' career decision making process will be hindered. Students should be aware of their abilities and talents and should apply this introspective knowledge to the career decision making process.

There are several ways by which the individual can gain awareness about - and learn from exploration of world of work careers and occupations.

1. Awareness Lessons: Kindergarten through grade twelve instructional lessons and units which effect and

enrich student awareness of world of work.

2. Career Counseling: A series of group career counseling meetings and counseling meetings with individuals to assist them in decision-making.
3. Career Seminars: Guest speakers appear before groups of students to discuss their occupations and related education/training needs.
4. Field Trips: Students are taken out into the community - as part of instructional lessons - to both observe and interact with local area resources.
5. Guest Speakers: Community resource people appear in classrooms for purposes of meeting with students to discuss their jobs.
6. Mini Courses: Elective skills development courses for students in grades 10-12.
7. Training Sites: Students are placed at community resource sites for purposes of pre-employment training and skills development.

EXPERIENCED BASED CE

There is no adequate substitute for the practical career/vocational training experience which students gain while on-the-job in real world of work situations.

There are times when world of work simulations in classrooms can be effectively used to enrich student awareness and exposure but no simulated activity or environment can replicate the character of a complex and multi-faceted real world of work setting in its entirety. Absent in the simulated experience are the people, the atmosphere, the

daily routines, and the social give-and-take which are inherently part and parcel of the character of any given community world of work setting.

If students are to learn and to apply knowledge and skills on-the-job then there is a need for them to go out into the community; into the marketplace where services and skills are exchanged for economic advantage, and to apply their abilities and talents under real work conditions.

Student awareness, exposure, and skills training can be greatly enhanced when instructional programs are structured so as to provide for a balance between pre-employment cognition and psychomotor development, and skills application in real world of work situations.

A good blending, for example, would consist of awareness lessons, field trips, and classroom guest speakers (K-6); additional lessons, field trips, and classroom guest speakers (for purposes of awareness and exposure enrichment) as well as career counseling and skills oriented mini course (7-10); and pre-employment experience placement at community resource sites for vocational skills training (10-12).

Prior to placement at community based training sites, it is essential that each student's *entry level abilities* be known. Entry level factors are those abilities, interests, and skills - related to specific vocational occupations - which a student possesses at the time when he/she is placed at a training site. Using a variety of achievement and knowledge test batteries such as those published by INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS LABORATORY (welding), PSYCHOLOGICAL CORPORATION

(business education), PUBLIC PERSONNEL ASSOCIATION (mechanical handyman), and SCIENCE RESEARCH ASSOCIATES (carpenters, plumbers), it becomes an easier task to determine cognitive and psychomotor levels of expertise.

Knowing a student's entry level abilities and skills enables the CE program staff to clearly identify sites which possess properties and provide experiences which enhance learning and skills application. The key to site placement is learning through experience. The ultimate determinate of the value of student site placement is: has the student developed and applied new knowledge and skills (not previously documented vis-a-vis achievement and knowledge battery testing) within the context of a site experience?

Once a student's entry level abilities have been identified and evaluated there is a need to:

1. identify a site which meets the student's vocational interests and needs;
2. develop student achievement site training goals and objectives;
3. supervise the student's *on-the-job* training at the site (both knowledge and skills acquisition and application); and
4. the student documents and evaluates his/her experiences and learning vis-a-vis the stated and agreed upon goals and objectives.

In the opinion of students who have experienced site placement and training, off campus experiences get them ready for the kinds of jobs that they want when they get out of school; provide the opportunity to do something; and enable

them to apply all accumulated abilities and skills to the immediate task(s).

FIELD TRIPS

Simply defined, field trips are organized small group/large group student activities which compliment and/or reinforce classroom instruction. The key to field trip success is that each off campus activity serves some stated educational goal or objective in-and-by itself. A given field trip can be an aestetic experience, a leisure time activity, or a classroom instruction enrichment excursion - but it must also be a learning experience. The criteria for a field trip should be: does the activity possess stated goals and objectives and can those aims be met - to a better degree than can be accomplished via some other instructional route (e.g., classroom instruction, films or filmstrips, guest speakers with slides)?

Well planned field trips can be employed by teachers and CE staff personnel for purposes of student exposure to - and interaction with vocationally oriented community resource sites and world of work employees. When the composite character and nature of the community cannot be taken into the classroom, the field trip activity can be employed for purposes of taking students out into the real world of the community - to observe and learn more about the diversity of occupations performed and services provided on a day-to-day basis.

CE RESOURCE CENTERS AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT

There is a need to provide instructional materials for teacher/student use in the classroom or outdoors, and to provide CE program professional staff with in-service training.

No CE program can become fully operational or successful unless adequate and diverse instructional materials are made available to classrooms. There is a need to create a delivery system whereby materials are cataloged and made readily available for student/teacher use - when most advantageous and complementary to instruction and learning.

Ideally, a resource center is a central location wherein materials are stored and where AV and other instructional specialists are located. A resource center can also house the school system's curriculum/program development staff. In addition to the central materials repository - and in order to facilitate the distribution of materials throughout a system - there is a need to create and stock satellite facilities referred to herein as *resource rooms*.

Resource rooms, located in individual schools, can be manned and supervised by building level AV coordinators. These several (building faculty/staff) coordinators, working closely with the central resource center staff, can see to it that buildings are adequately equipped with needed materials and that requested hardware/software are delivered.

At both the central resource center and at the several building level satellite resource rooms, there is a need to provide facilities and programs related to teacher in-service training in AV (e.g., equipment acquaintance, use, and

repair) as well as program areas (e.g., career education, language arts, mathematics, and the social studies). These several facilities should be equipped with dark room, laminating machines, duplicators, photo copiers, bulletin board display makers, etc.; all of the hardware needed to produce instructional items for student use. It is within these service centers that teachers receive training in AV.

Staff development programs should focus in on two (2) separate - but interrelated aspects of teacher training:

1. awareness and exposure to concepts, content, materials, pedagogical strategies, and skills related to unfamiliar disciplines (e.g., career education, environmental education); and
2. knowledge and skills enrichment (upgrading) in more-familiar content and service subjects (e.g., language arts, mathematics, music, physical education, science, and the social studies).

The talents of resource center personnel, contracted services consultants, and system level teachers, as well as support service staff members, can be engaged in the continuous process of teacher training. Too often, the professional expertise, skills, and talents of classroom teachers go untapped - as a result of a reluctance on the part of administrators, curriculum specialists, and higher education faculty to directly involve them in the 'how to' training of pre-service and other in-service teachers. Teacher limited or non-involvement results, locally, in a loss of a valuable human resource; a resource which is readily available, within a given system, at no additional expense to the community.

or to the school.

VALUES CLARIFICATION

Many academic subject matter areas, such as the several social studies disciplines, have incorporated values clarification strategies into curricula activities. In career education, one of the basic tenents of the instructional movement is student appreciation for the world of work; a valuing of work as an honest and necessary human endeavor.

With Sydney Simon[6] as a guide there are several strategies which can be employed in an attempt to affect student attitudes, behavior, decision making, and values regarding work.

1. Exposure to community based world of work settings via audi-visual presentations, field trips and guest speakers (e.g., career seminars) for purposes of understanding and appreciation.
2. Elective mini courses in several vocational areas (e.g., building trades, health occupations, mechanics, plumbing) for purposes of skills acquaintance and development.
3. Individual and group counseling and testing (e.g., career guidance sessions) to affect attitudes and to determine personal strengths and weaknesses.

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[6] Reference to Values Clarification by Sydney Simon.

4. Values Clarification Seminars for students who are to be placed at local training sites. To prepare them to work cooperatively with others on-the-job, to prepare for task responsibility and accomplishment, and to participate in the on-the-job decision making process.

Only as a result of awareness, exposure and on-the-job training can students learn about a diversity of occupations and gain first hand knowledge of world of work careers. It is as a result of their direct involvement in learning activities that students comprehend the character and nature of work and value it as a human endeavor. It is work that enables the talented individual to contribute his abilities and skills to the collective whole of society. Work provides the individual with the opportunity to better his life - the lives of his dependents - and the collective life of the community/society.

COMMENTS ON CAREER EDUCATION IN THE RURAL K-12 SETTING

In the several, not so isolated instances where rural school plant facilities, faculty expertise, instructional equipment/materials, and funds are limited, *the natural, social and human resources of the community*[7] can be incorporated into the instructional curricula and employed for purposes of student learning enrichment.

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7 Peters, Richard O. and L. Timothy Fisher, The Utilization of Natural, Social and Human Community Resources In the Process of Student Career Awareness Development, American Educational Research Association (paper presentation), April 1976. ED 121 991

A key to CE program development and implementation in rural communities is staffing. There is a need for someone to be accountable/responsible for program development; that is, someone who's job it is to plan a classroom based instructional program, to schedule and supervise field trips and other out-of-school excursions, and to test/place/supervise students for on-the-job training at community resource sites.

In the case of most rural communities they have relatively small populations, are somewhat isolated one from the other, and have limited community resources available for incorporation into the instructional program. Someone must plan and coordinate the comprehensive program; maximizing the potential of the limited natural, social, human, and economic resources available.

The *career education coordinator* should be involved in a variety of professional activities related to CE program development, implementation, evaluation, and continuous revision/improvement. For example:

- *Recommends and develops new programs and curricula.*
- *Career education instructional materials resource person to K-12 teachers.*
- *Administers and coordinates the student training site program.*
- *Chairs career education/vocational education advisory and craft committees.*
- *Serves as consultant to the professional staff regarding program compliance with all pertinent rules and regulations.*
- *Prepares and/or supervises all reports required to be filed with local, state, and federal agencies.*

.To assist teachers with their budget requisitions related to career education/vocational education programs.

.Participates in the evaluation of the effectiveness of the career education/vocational education programs as they relate to meeting student needs and interests.

.Coordinates the comprehensive Kindergarten through grade twelve instructional program.

.Establishes and maintains close working relationships with community and state agencies as well as area businesses, industries, and labor organizations.

.Supervises teacher in-service training.

.Interprets the career education/vocational education programs to the public.

.Participates in professional group activities and maintains membership in organizations devoted to the advancement of career education and vocational education.

In rural school settings, there is a need to enlist the active participation and support of community resource people. Acting as classroom guest speakers, field trip chaperones, mini course instructors, resource site tour guides, and training site supervisors, community members can assist program implementation and provide off-campus learning experiences and instruction for students of differing ages and abilities.

In rural systems with limited facilities and funds there is a need to mobilize the support of the world of work community behind efforts to create and provide career education awareness, exploration and skills training to students.

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